



Birds of Aruba



LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

SUNDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

MONDAY:

ANDERSON BAHAMON
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

TUESDAY:

JEAN PAUL
SAXOPHONIST
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

WEDNESDAY:

MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

THURSDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

FRIDAY:

MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST
7:00 TO 9:00 P.M.

SATURDAY:

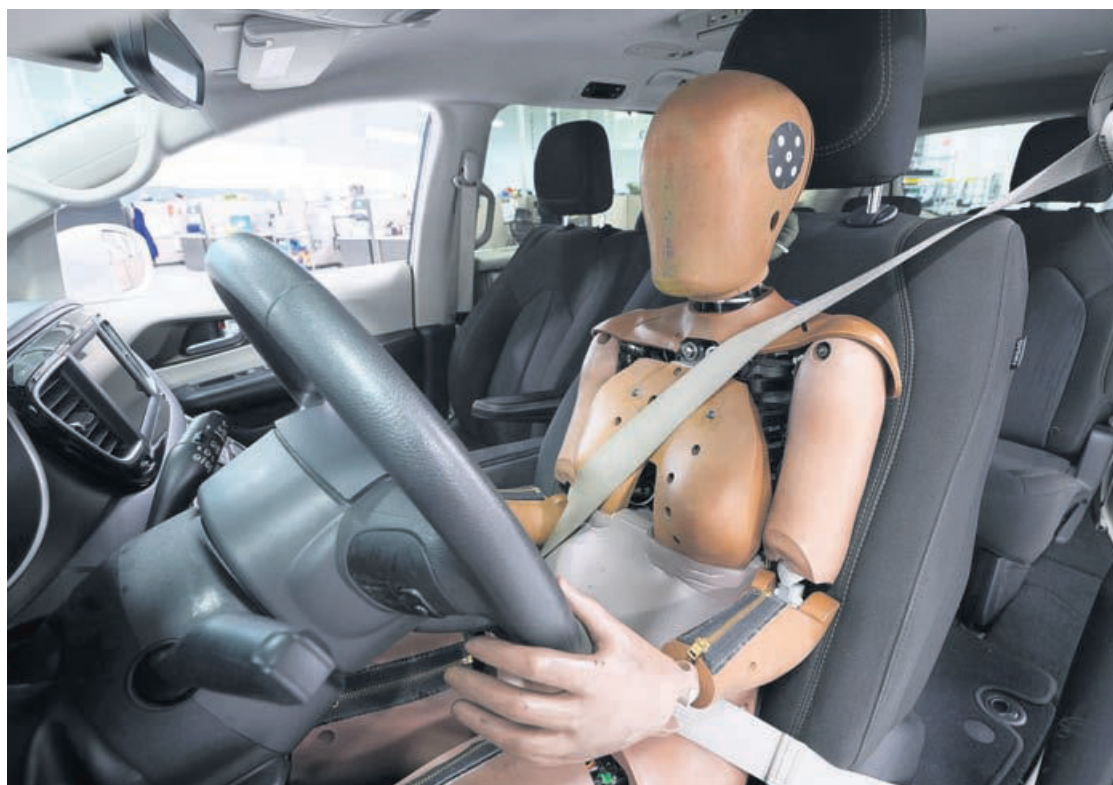
RICKY THOMAS
GUITAR
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.



Happy Hour
12-1 / 4-6 / 9-10



A new crash test dummy that better resembles women gets key government endorsement



A THOR-5F female crash test dummy is shown in a driver's seat at Humanetics in Farmington Hills, Mich., June 10, 2025.

By **JEFF McMURRAY** and **AUDREY McAVOY**

The Associated Press (AP)—

The U.S. government announced major design changes it wants to implement to make the female version of the vehicle crash test dummy more lifelike, potentially replacing a model used for decades that is based almost entirely around the body of a man despite higher injury risks for

women.

Department of Transportation officials will consider using the new dummy in the government's vehicle crash test five-star ratings once a final rule is adopted, Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said Thursday night in a news release.

Women are 73% more likely to be injured in a head-on crash, and they are 17% more likely to be killed in a

car crash, than men.

The standard crash test dummy used in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration five-star vehicle testing was developed in 1978 and was modeled after a 5-foot-9 (175-centimeter), 171-pound (78-kilogram) man. The female dummy is smaller and has a rubber jacket to represent breasts. It's routinely tested in the passenger or back

seat but seldom in the driver's seat, even though the majority of licensed drivers are women.

But the change is not guaranteed to happen. Some American automakers have been skeptical and a group representing auto insurers has already said it thinks the current crash test dummies are fine.

The new female dummy endorsed by the department more accurately reflects differences between men and women, including the shape of the neck, collarbone, pelvis, and legs. It's outfitted with more than 150 sensors, the department said.

Maria Weston Kuhn, a law student at New York University, started lobbying members of Congress to pass a law requiring the new female dummy after surviving a 2019 crash in Ireland in which her seat belt slid off her hips and ruptured her intestines. She welcomed Duffy's support but said she won't celebrate until NHTSA incorporates the new model into its testing a step that has been delayed numerous times.

"I fear that with this announcement everybody will throw up their hands

and say we've won," Kuhn said Friday. "But we are far from crossing the finish line."

Some American automakers have been skeptical, arguing the new model may exaggerate injury risks and undercut the value of some safety features such as seat belts and airbags. Despite Duffy's announcement, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, a research arm funded by auto insurers, continues to advocate for the current line of dummies used to represent women and has seen dramatic improvements in safety as a result, spokesperson Joe Young said.

"Certainly we are going to continue to monitor the new tools and perhaps do some additional research," Young said.

"But for now, our researchers are content and confident that the dummies we're using are doing a good job."

Lawmakers and transportation secretaries from the past two presidential administrations have expressed support for new crash test rules and safety requirements, but developments have been slow. □

The Associated Press.

Torrential rains return to Southern California, prompting new flash flood fears, threat of mudslides

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Torrential rains drenched parts of Southern California on Friday, leading to new flash flood warnings following earlier storms that put the region on track for near-record November rainfall, the National Weather Service said.

Before dawn Friday, residents were warned of flash flooding of streets, creeks and streams and possible mudslides in several parts of Los Angeles and Orange counties. In coastal Huntington Beach, rain flowed through some streets like a stream.

The most recent flash flood warnings from the National Weather Service covered

areas spanning from downtown Los Angeles and Santa Monica to Mission Viejo in Orange County. Some vehicles were stuck in floodwaters near Culver City before dawn on Friday, the weather service reported.

In Huntington Beach, much of the water had receded by Friday morning. One neighborhood remained flooded after a local pond overflowed, spilling water into the streets and trapping parked cars.

A series of storms beginning Nov. 13 has unleashed copious amounts of rain, more than four times the normal amount that typically falls in November in downtown Los Angeles, according to

weather service reports. In a normal November, downtown Los Angeles typically gets 0.78 of an

inch (2 centimeters) of rain, but has already seen about 3.5 inches (8.9 centimeters) this month. Santa Barbara

County has been a magnet for the moisture. Parts of the Santa Ynez Mountains have seen more than 15 inches (38 centimeters) of rain this month, the weather service said.

A potent atmospheric river is blamed for causing at least a half-dozen deaths earlier this month as it rolled across much of California. Heavy rains also bring the threat of mudslides in areas that were recently ravaged by wildfire.

Atmospheric rivers are long and relatively narrow bands of water vapor that form over an ocean and flow through the sky, transporting much of the moisture from the tropics to northern latitudes. □



A local pond overflows into a residential neighborhood in Huntington Beach, Calif. following a storm on Friday, Nov. 21, 2025.

The Associated Press.

Shootings of people who mistakenly go the wrong house test limits of stand your ground laws

By JOHN SEEWER
Associated Press

The fatal shooting of a house cleaner who Indiana authorities say mistakenly went to the wrong address feels hauntingly familiar. It's a tragic ending that has played out before across a nation where stand-your-ground laws have become increasingly common and there's a perception that crime in cities is a significant problem. Here are some high profile examples of such shootings:

House cleaner shot in Indianapolis suburb

A homeowner fired a gun without a warning through his front door on Nov. 5 after hearing someone trying to unlock it, killing Maria Florinda Rios Perez De Velasquez, a house cleaner who went to the wrong address, according to court documents and police. Curt Andersen, of Whitestown, Indiana, was charged with voluntary manslaughter in a case that could test the limits of stand-your-ground laws. His



Curt Andersen leaves the Boone County Courthouse after appearing for a hearing on a voluntary manslaughter charge in the killing of Maria Florinda Rios Perez De Velasquez in Lebanon, Ind., Friday, Nov. 21, 2025.

defense attorney maintains that Andersen had every reason to believe his actions were justified under the law.

College student killed near campus

A University of South Carolina student was shot and killed in 2023 when he was mistaken for a burglar while trying to enter the wrong

home on a street where he lived near campus.

Authorities decided not to charge the homeowner after finding that 20-year-old student Nicholas Anthony Donofrio had banged on the front door, broke its window and was trying to open a handle. Honor student wounded after ringing wrong doorbell

Ralph Yarl, a Black honor student in Kansas City, Missouri, showed up on the doorstep of Andrew Lester, an 86-year-old white man, after mixing up where he was supposed to pick up his twin siblings in 2023. Lester, whose attorney argued that he was terrified by the stranger at his door, shot the teen in the head

and arm.

Yarl survived the shooting, and Lester pleaded guilty nearly two years later to second-degree assault. Lester died just days after pleading guilty.

Woman dies after boyfriend pulls into wrong driveway

A 20-year-old woman was with friends who mistakenly turned into a backcountry driveway in upstate New York when she was shot and killed by the homeowner who fired a shotgun from his porch in 2023.

A year later, a jury convicted 66-year-old Kevin Monahan of second-degree murder in the death of Kaylin Gillis. Monahan said he believed his house was under siege by intruders and intended to fire a warning shot.

Woman seeking help shot through screen door

Renisha McBride, a Black woman who was looking for help after a car accident and knocking on doors in a Detroit suburb in 2013, died after a white resident fired through his screen door. □

The Associated Press.

Trump administration sues California over giving in-state tuition to immigrants in US illegally

By JULIE WATSON
Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — The Trump administration has sued California for providing in-state college tuition, scholarships, and state-funded financial aid to students who do not have legal status to be in the United States. The lawsuit, filed Thursday in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California, alleges the practice harms U.S. citizens and encourages illegal immigration. Among the defendants are the state, top state officials, and the state's two public university systems, the University of California and California State. President Donald Trump's administration has filed similar lawsuits against policies in other states, including Il-

linois, Oklahoma, Minnesota, Kentucky and Texas. Half the country now has similar laws to California's. In June, after the administration sued, Texas ended its decades-old law. And Florida last year scrapped its law that allowed in-state tuition for high school graduates who weren't in the country legally. Supporters of the state tuition breaks argue that they don't violate federal law if they provide the same rates to U.S. citizens in the same circumstances meaning they are residents of the state and graduates of one of its high schools. The California Dream Act also allows such students to apply for state-funded financial aid. Many of the students were brought to the U.S. by their

parents when they were children, and supporters of the laws say they are as much a part of their communities as U.S. citizens. It is the latest action by Trump's administration since he issued executive orders in February directing federal agencies to stop public benefits from going to immigrants living in the U.S. illegally and to challenge state and local policies seen as favoring those immigrants over some citizens. The lawsuit argues that the Republican president's orders enforce federal immigration laws. "California is illegally discriminating against American students and families by offering exclusive tuition benefits for non-citizens," Attorney General Pamela Bondi said in a statement.



Students walk past Royce Hall on the UCLA campus in Los Angeles, Aug. 15, 2024.

The Associated Press.

"This marks our third lawsuit against California in one week we will continue bringing litigation against California until the state ceases its flagrant disregard for federal law." The Justice Department also sued to block new con-

gressional district boundaries approved by California voters last week, and over California's new laws banning federal agents from wearing masks and requiring them to have identification while conducting operations in the state. □

Pope tweaks a law allowing a woman to head the Vatican City State, months after a nun was appointed

By NICOLE WINFIELD

Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Pope Leo XIV fixed a technical glitch on Friday in a Vatican law that became problematic after Pope Francis named the first-ever woman to head the Vatican City State administration.

Leo amended the 2023 law to remove a reference that had said the president of the Vatican City State administration must be a cardinal.

Francis in February appointed Sister Raffaella Petrini, a 56-year-old Italian nun, as president of the city state. The appointment was one of many Francis made during his 12-year papacy to elevate women to top decision-making jobs in the Vatican, and it marked the first time a woman had been named governor of the 44-hectare (110-acre) territory in the heart of Rome. But the appointment immediately created technical and legal problems that hadn't existed before because Petrini's predecessors had all been



Pope Francis shakes hands with Sister Raffaella Petrini, secretary general of the Vatican's governorship, at the Vatican, on Dec. 23, 2021.

The Associated Press.

priestly cardinals.

For example, Petrini wasn't invited to deliver the economic status report of the Vatican City State to the closed-door meetings of cardinals in spring that preceded the May conclave that elected Leo.

Normally, the cardinal-president of the Vatican City State would have delivered the briefing. But those pre-conclave meetings, known as general congregations, are for cardinals only. In changing the law Friday to allow a non-cardinal to

be president of the Vatican administration, Leo suggested that Petrini's appointment was not a one-off. He wrote that the governance of the territory was a form of service and responsibility that must characterize communion within

the church hierarchy.

"This form of shared responsibility makes it appropriate to consolidate certain solutions that have been developed so far in response to governance needs that are proving increasingly complex and pressing," Leo wrote.

Petrini's office is responsible for the main revenue sources funding the Holy See coffers, including the Vatican Museums, but it also handles the infrastructure, telecommunications and healthcare for the city state. The Vatican City State commission she heads is responsible for approving laws governing the territory, and approving the annual budgets and accounts. The Catholic Church reserves the priesthood for men. While women made strides in reaching top management jobs in the Vatican during Francis' pontificate, there was no movement or indication that the all-male hierarchy would change rules barring women from ministerial ordination. □

Mexico's bullied pageant contestant gets payback by capturing Miss Universe crown

By TIAN MACLEOD

Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — Fátima Bosch Fernández of Mexico was crowned Miss Universe 2025 on Friday, a dramatic victory for a 25-year-old at the center of the turbulent 74th staging of the popular beauty pageant in Bangkok who stood up to public bullying from one of the hosts. The issues at this year's event sprang from a sharp-tongued scolding of Bosch, which sparked a controversy marked by a walkout, feminist solidarity and a teary, melodramatic apology from the local organizer who set it all off.

When Bosch was announced as the winner, cheers and screams erupted from the audience, with Mexican flags waved by elated supporters.

Speaking to the media after her victory, Bosch said

that she would like to be remembered as "a person that changed a little bit the prototype of what is a Miss Universe and a real person that gives the heart."

She also paid tribute to the pageant, describing it as "a platform that is strong because they have the space

that women are searching to have a voice."

The first runner-up was 29-year old Praveenar Singh of Thailand and 25-year-old Stephany Adriana Abasali Nasser of Venezuela placed third. Rounding up the finishers were Ahtisa Manalo, 28, of the Philip-

pines, and 27-year-old Olivia Yacé of Ivory Coast who came fifth.

At the livestreamed sashing ceremony for the more than 100 contestants on Nov. 4, Thai national director Nawat Itsaragrisil hectored Bosch for allegedly not following his guidelines for taking part in local promotional activities. He called security when she spoke up to defend herself. Bosch walked out of the room, joined by several others in a show of solidarity, including Miss Universe 2024, Victoria Kjaer Theilvig of Denmark.

"What your director did is not respectful: He called me dumb," an unbowed Bosch told Thai reporters. "If it takes away your dignity, you need to go."

Nawat insisted that he did not call her "dumb."

The Miss Universe Organi-

zation president, Mexican businessman Raúl Rocha Cantú, released a statement condemning Nawat's conduct as "public aggression" and "serious abuse." Even Mexico's first woman president, Claudia Sheinbaum, piled on, saying at a news conference in her country's capital that she wanted to give "recognition" to Miss Mexico for voicing her disagreement in a "dignified" way.

"It seems to me that it is an example of how women should raise our voices," Sheinbaum said.

Sheinbaum recalled being told in the past that "women look more beautiful when they keep quiet."

"We women look more beautiful when we raise our voice and participate, because that has to do with the recognition of our rights," she said. □



Miss Mexico Fatima Bosch, center, is celebrated by other contestants after winning the 2025 Miss Universe pageant in Nonthaburi, north of Bangkok, Thailand, Friday, Nov. 21, 2025.

The Associated Press.

WHO declares end of Indonesia's poliovirus outbreak following yearslong vaccination campaign



A medical worker gives a vaccine to a boy during a polio immunization campaign at Sigli Town Square in Pidie, Aceh province, Indonesia, Nov. 28, 2022.

The Associated Press.

By NINIEK KARMINI

Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)

— The World Health Organization has declared Indonesia's polio outbreak officially over, following nearly three years of intensive response efforts, officials said Friday.

Indonesia has remained largely polio-free as the highly contagious disease

was declared eliminated in the country in 2014. But eight years later, an outbreak emerged in the country's conservative Aceh province, prompted by a dangerous combination of consistently low routine immunization and unhealthy environmental conditions. In 2021, only 50.9% of infants born in Aceh received polio vac-

cination.

Officials say that polio immunization rates in Aceh are well behind the rest of the country, with efforts hampered by widespread disinformation that the vaccine is incompatible with religious beliefs, among other things.

The government has also been prioritizing COVID-19 vaccinations since they be-

came available.

Over the next two years, cases appeared in the provinces of Banten, West Java, Central Java, East Java, North Maluku, Central Papua, Highland Papua and South Papua, prompting the mass immunization and information drive. Nearly 60 million additional doses of polio vaccine were administered to children during the response. The last confirmed polio case was in South Papua province on June 2024. Since then, no poliovirus has been detected in children or in the environment, prompting WHO to declare the outbreak over on Wednesday.

In a joint announcement on Friday, Indonesian Health Minister Budi Gunadi Sadikin credited the success to "the dedication of health workers and the commitment of parents and communities," while WHO's Western Pacific Regional Director Saia Ma'u Piukala called the achievement "a critical step toward global eradication," while calling for continued vigilance.

"I urge all our 38 countries

and areas to remain vigilant. One day polio will be just a memory. Until then, we vaccinate," Piukala said.

With the end of the polio outbreak, Sadikin vowed to keep Indonesia polio-free through strengthening routine immunization, enhancing surveillance, cross-sectoral collaboration and community support.

"Every child deserves protection," he said. "We cannot be complacent, however. The risk of polio remains, especially with the gaps in immunization coverage in several provinces in Indonesia."

Indonesia's response included two rounds of nationwide immunization using novel oral polio vaccine type 2 and improved routine coverage. The second dose of inactivated polio vaccine rose from 1.9 million children or 63% in 2023 to 3.2 million children or 73% last year, aided by the introduction of a hexavalent vaccine which expected to reduce the number of injections children receive and accelerate the development of immunity to various diseases. □

Indian fighter jet crashes during a demonstration flight at Dubai Air Show, killing the pilot

By JON GAMBRELL and SHEIKH SAALIQ

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)

— An Indian fighter jet crashed Friday at the start of a demonstration flight in front of a crowd of spectators at the Dubai Air Show, killing its sole pilot.

The Indian HAL Tejas smashed into the ground at the vast Al Maktoum International Airport at Dubai World Central, sending a vast fireball into the air and thick black smoke into the sky. Police vehicles, ambulances and a helicopter rushed to the site of the crash, spraying firefighting foam to extinguish the blaze.

Onlookers, including fami-

lies who gathered in a grand stand for the end of the air show Friday, gasped in horror and disbelief at the crash in this city-state in the United Arab Emirates. The airplane appeared to have lost control and dove directly toward the ground.

The Indian Air Force confirmed the crash and said "the pilot sustained fatal injuries in the accident."

"IAF deeply regrets the loss of life and stands firmly with the bereaved family in this time of grief," it said in a statement. It said "a court of inquiry is being constituted, to ascertain the cause of the accident."

Emirati crash investigators also will investigate the

crash. The city-state's second airport hosts the biennial Dubai Air Show. This year's edition saw major aircraft orders by both the long-haul carrier Emirates and its lower-cost sister airline FlyDubai.

"Firefighting and emergency teams responded rapidly to the incident and are currently managing the situation on-site," the Dubai Media Office, which responds to crises in the sheikhdom, said on X.

An SUV bearing diplomatic plates flying the Indian flag was seen at the site, along with police and emergency personnel.

The air show resumed flight demonstrations about an hour and a half afterward,

with the Russian Knights flying overhead as emergency crews still worked the crash site.

Tejas is India's indigenous fighter aircraft, built by state-run Hindustan Aeronautics Limited. □



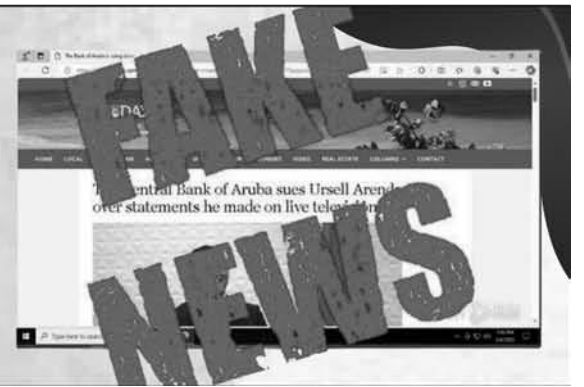
Emergency services attend the scene after an Indian HAL Tejas crashed during a demonstration at the Dubai Air Show, at Al Maktoum International Airport at Dubai World Central, Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Friday Nov. 21, 2025.

The Associated Press.

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Netanyahu convenes cabinet on settler violence in the West Bank that continues unabated

By JULIA FRANKEL

Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's prime minister met with top security officials to discuss a rising tide of Israeli settler violence in the West Bank, an Israeli official said Friday, as fresh allegations surfaced of Israeli settlers hurling rocks at passing Palestinian vehicles in the West Bank village of Huwara.

Huwara Mayor Jihad Ouda said the stone throwing was quickly followed by a huge fire at a nearby scrapyard. Flames lit up the evening sky and sent massive columns of smoke into the air, images and video on social media showed. The military said it had reports that Israelis set the fire and that police were investigating. At the meeting, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and officials from the military, the country's Shin Bet domestic security service and the police discussed the recent spike in violence and proposals on curbing it, according to an Israeli official who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not permitted to talk about a closed-door gathering. The official said proposals floated at the meeting included getting violent settlers to attend educational programs. The Prime Minister's office did not immediately respond to request for comment about what was discussed.

The Israeli official said there would be a follow-up meeting.

Settler attacks ramped up during the Palestinian olive harvest season in October and early November and have continued since. Netanyahu has called the perpetrators "a handful of extremists" and urged law



Smoke rises from scorched cars in a scrapyard that was set ablaze the night before by who local residents alleged were Israeli settlers in the town of Huwara near the West Bank city of Nablus, Friday, Nov. 21, 2025.

enforcement to pursue them for "the attempt to take the law into their own hands." But rights groups and Palestinians say the problem is far greater than a few bad apples, and attacks have become a daily phenomenon across the territory.

Separately, the Palestinian Health Ministry said two Palestinian youths aged 18 and 16 were killed by Israeli gunfire overnight. The circumstances of the shootings were not immediately clear. Israeli police did not immediately respond when asked to comment.

Stones hurled at Palestinian cars, scrapyard torched

Mohammad Dalal, the owner of the torched Huwara scrapyard, claimed that witnesses told him Israeli settlers were seen throwing rocks Thursday from an overpass at passing Palestinian vehicles below. He said the massive fire began soon after.

He said the Israeli army arrived later to force the perpetrators away.

"If the army had not removed them, they would have done even more," Dalal said. "These settlers are causing destruction everywhere here. ... Where can we go? We want to remain steadfast on our land, no matter what."

An Israeli investigation unit of soldiers and border police officers on Friday collected evidence at the scorched scrapyard, according to an Associated Press crew who was asked to leave by the investigators.

Asked about the incident, the Israeli military said it dispatched soldiers to the area after receiving reports that settlers were throwing rocks at Palestinian cars. It also said other reports indicated that "several" Israeli civilians had set fires and damaged property in the area. It said soldiers

searched the area but didn't find any suspects and that the police were now handling the case.

Huwara has been the target of numerous attacks over recent years. In February 2023, scores of Israeli settlers went on a violent rampage there, setting dozens of cars and homes on fire after two settlers were killed by a Palestinian gunman. Palestinian medics said one man was killed and four others were badly wounded.

Settler violence surges

U.N. humanitarian office figures show 2,920 Israeli settler attacks took place between January and October this year.

Israel's government is dominated by far-right proponents of the settler movement including Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, who formulates settlement policy, and Cabinet minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, who oversees the nation's po-

lice force.

The security cabinet meeting came shortly after Israeli settlers celebrated the creation of a new, unauthorized settlement near Bethlehem.

Israel's Civil Administration also recently announced plans to expropriate large swaths of Sebastia, a major archaeological site in the West Bank. Peace Now, an anti-settlement watchdog group, said the site is around 1,800 dunams (450 acres) Israel's largest seizure of archaeologically important land.

Singapore slaps sanctions on Israeli settlers

Singapore said Friday it will impose targeted financial sanctions and entry bans on four Israeli individuals for what it said was their involvement in violence against Palestinians in the West Bank. Singapore's Foreign Ministry named the individuals as Meir Ettinger, Elisha Yered, Ben-Zion Gopstein and Baruch Marzel. Some are currently under international sanction by the European Union, the U.K. and other countries.

In a statement, Singapore's Foreign Ministry said the settlers have been involved in "egregious acts of extremist violence against Palestinians in the West Bank" and urged the Israeli government to stop the violence and hold the perpetrators accountable.

"Such actions are unlawful and undermine and jeopardize prospects for a two-State solution," the Foreign Ministry said, adding that it viewed Israeli settlements in the West Bank as illegal and that their presence and expansion make it much more difficult to reach a viable two-State solution. □

Aruba's kite flying tradition



(Oranjestad)—Every year for King's Day, Arubans gather with friends and family to fly kites. Big or small, paper or plastic, blue skies fill up with these colorful flying contraptions, brightening our yearly celebration of the Dutch Monarch.

The tradition of flying kites

starts at home in the weeks leading up to King's Day. These kites were traditionally made with things found in the nearby *mondi** and in the kitchen at home. Using dried up cactus sticks for the frame, old news papers, and glue made from flour, water and salt to dry faster (some people even use

cornstarch slurry as glue), kids usually make their own kites with their friends, parents or other close family members. Tails are made from old bed sheets, ripped and tied together to create a long string of fabric trailing behind the back end of the kite. To finish off the process, people used fish



lines or thin rope to tie three corners of the kite together. Another long string of rope is tied in the knotted center and bundled up, used to steer the kite as it flies in the air. Decorating the kite was especially important, and children would use paint to create their own designs—the more colorful, the better!

People usually fly their kites in big open fields, like empty

soccer and baseball fields found all around the island around noon, when the sun is at its brightest. In the past few years, kite flying has become a sport in which groups of people would battle against each other to see whose kite is the biggest, the prettiest, and whose could fly flawlessly and longer in the air.

*Mondi: Aruban woods. □

The Aruban way of life: Creating community with Cas di Torto

(Oranjestad)—The Aruban people understand that a happy life is spent in great ambience with your loved ones. Passed down from one generation to the other, building community has been a key aspect in forging our traditions and customs. The Cas di Torto (mud house) played a big role in cultivating community, bridging families together and forming close bonds with your neighbors—something we highly value today.

Cas di Torto: History and construction

The origin of the Cas di Torto is said to date back to the early 19th cen-

tury in the Paraguana Peninsula in Venezuela. Refugees who sought sanctuary on Aruba introduced this building method to the island.

The uprights of the walls were made with sturdy and straight wayaca or kwihi wood, or from thin mangrove struts. Then, the wattle walls were weaved in using branches and twigs from the warero and sisal plant, daubed with a mixture of grass and mud. Finally, the walls got a coat of white plaster to seal everything in.

For roofing, corn stalks, palm fronds and straws were used, allowing air

to flow freely through the house. This method of roofing was known throughout the ABC islands (Aruba, Curacao, Bonaire), but the use of corn stalks in Aruba eventually got replaced with use of mud and white plaster for the roofs. The white plaster all around made the houses look like cake, hence the name "Torto" (Spanish for "cake").

Building community

Building Torto houses was often a community effort. Young couples who were about to get married had to have their house built before they could tie the knot and start their own family. This is where the help of the community comes into play.

Neighbors, extended family and friends would all help in the construction of a Torto House. And everyone had a role: The men oversaw the building of the house, and the women were tasked with collecting wood and straws, cooking and taking care of the little ones.

The couple's family were primarily responsible for feeding everyone who helped build the house. Before construction, someone usually had the task to prepare the meal; going fishing or slaughter farm animals like goats, chicken or sheep. Even the older kids had their tasks; the older children of the family usually helped with collecting water



and mixing the mud.

The average duration of constructing a Cas di Torto was 4 months.

At the end of a long day of work, everyone would gather around and enjoy a feast of hearty food. This type of help from friends and family became a tradition and was called "paga lomba": You help me today; I'll help you tomorrow.

Nowadays, traditional Cas di Torto are rare, especially those that are still inhabited. Houses that do exist probably date back more than a century. □

Picture credits: Aruba National Library (BNA) and the Monumentbureau archive on Coleccion.aw



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A quick snack for the road

Learn how to make the Aruban Pastechi!

(Oranjestad)—If you ever been to Aruba before, you probably heard of (and even tried) the Aruban Pastechi. Beloved by young and old, this tasty treat is a staple for party snacks, a quick lunch or even breakfast!

Here's how to make the Pastechi dough.

Ingredients:

- 4 cups of wheat flour
- 1 tbsp baking powder (if using self-rising flour, omit baking powder)
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 0.5 cup of melted butter
- 1 cup water
- 1 egg

Directions:

Sift your flour into a bowl and add all the dry ingredients before giving it a quick mix. Next add the butter, water and egg and mix until thoroughly combined. At this point, your dough will start to get sticky; time for an arm workout. Knead your dough into the bowl you are using or on a clean surface with some flour

lightly dusted until its surface is smooth. You'll know your dough is ready when it doesn't stick to your hands or the surface on which you're kneading it. Let your dough rest covered for 15-20 minutes.

After resting, divide your dough into approximately 100 gram balls and roll it flat with a rolling pin. The thickness of the pastechi depends on your taste, but the average thinness would be around ¼ inch or so.

Filling for the pastechis varies according to your taste. The easiest and most common filling you'll find in Aruba is a simple cheese filling. For this, we usually use shredded Gouda, but feel free to use any cheese that melts well when frying the pastry.

Place the filling on your rolled out piece of dough, fold it in half and pinch the sides shut with a fork. If you have a folding tool, feel free to use it for this process. Your pastechi is ready for the fryer!

If you want to store some pastechis for later use,



you can freeze them. A good tip is to place a piece of wax paper in between each pastechi if you are to store them on top of one another. This way the pastechis don't stick to each other when defrosting.

Here in Aruba we enjoy pastechi at any time of the day, but it has become almost tradition to eat pastechis for breakfast on the way to work. Many roadside snack trucks sell pastechi from early morning to noon, and offer a variety of fillings like cheese; ham and cheese; ground beef and pulled chicken to name a few. □



“Aruba to me is peace”

ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation. Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from Micki Streeter and Thomas Sedgwick from Bonner Springs, Kansas. They wrote to us saying: Aruba to me is peace, family, relaxation, fun and kindness.

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers! □

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Aruba: the legend behind its name

(Oranjestad)—Most folkloric tales and legends in Aruba revolve around our indigenous ancestors, who came from mainland Venezuela, and discovered the island and made it into their new home. This particular legend tells the story of the birth of the Aruba name.

The legend follows the life of Arua, an indigenous Cacique originally from Aroa in the Falcon state in Venezuela in the year 50 AD. Arua had a son around the year 70 AD with his wife Shira, who they named Corobori. When Corobori was old enough, he joined his father on the usual boat trip to the islands of Curacao and Bonaire to gather salt.

On their way back to Mainland Venezuela, they were caught up in a heavy rain storm—a side effect from a passing, but far away, hurricane. Of course, because of the lack of motors and sail, their boat was left in the mercy of the heavy winds. After a while, the storm started to pass, and the clouds began to clear up. Finally able to see around them, the Cacique spotted land approximately an hour away. So, they started to row in that direction until they reached the coast.

Once they arrived on what they thought was Venezuela, they decided to stay the night and fix their kayak. The next morning, the Cacique ordered his son and a few warriors to go find any sign of population in the area: "Corobori," Arua said. "Don't come back without news. It's in your hands how long we stay here till we find our family. So, if you need to take a week to gather information, we will wait for you."

"Don't worry," Corobori replied. "As soon as we have any information, we will let you know." Armed

with arrows and spears, backpacks filled with food and water containers, they set off. They climbed several small hills, but no sign of a village. They crossed different dry riverbeds, but no sign of anything. When the sun finally descended, they found themselves near a fairly tall hill and decided to climb it for a better view of a village. This hill was called Pan Dushi or Orcuyo, which today we call Hooiberg.

The next morning, they could clearly see that they have landed on an island, but an unfamiliar one at that. When Corobori went back to where his father was waiting, he told him the news: "Father Arua, you have just discovered an island, but it is not Curacao or Bonaire. Far in the south, we saw the big mountains of our homeland Venezuela, which we could have never seen on the other island. This leads us to believe we are on a new island. But that's not all. When the sun came up, we saw in the distance a glowing plain, which we think may be salt."

The Cacique was pleased to hear of his son's findings. He decided to stay a couple days on the newly-discovered island in search for salt. The next morning they ascended Hooiberg again and stayed to see if they could find nearby smoke, indicating an inhabitant village. But they found nothing. So they went back to their initial arrival settlement, now known as Santo Largo in Savaneta. The next morning they hiked along the Spaans Lagoen near the Mangel Halto Beach and reached the area of Bushiri. There, they boarded their kayaks and heading to what we know now as Malmok, where they found rocks of salt. After a couple days of exploring the island and gathering some salt rocks, they left for Venezuela, where they were reunited

with their families.

Throughout the year, they travelled back and forth to Aruba, collecting salt. After a while they settled on the island, generations of families living along the coast. Corobori was the first indigenous inhabitant in our history to explore the entirety of the island.

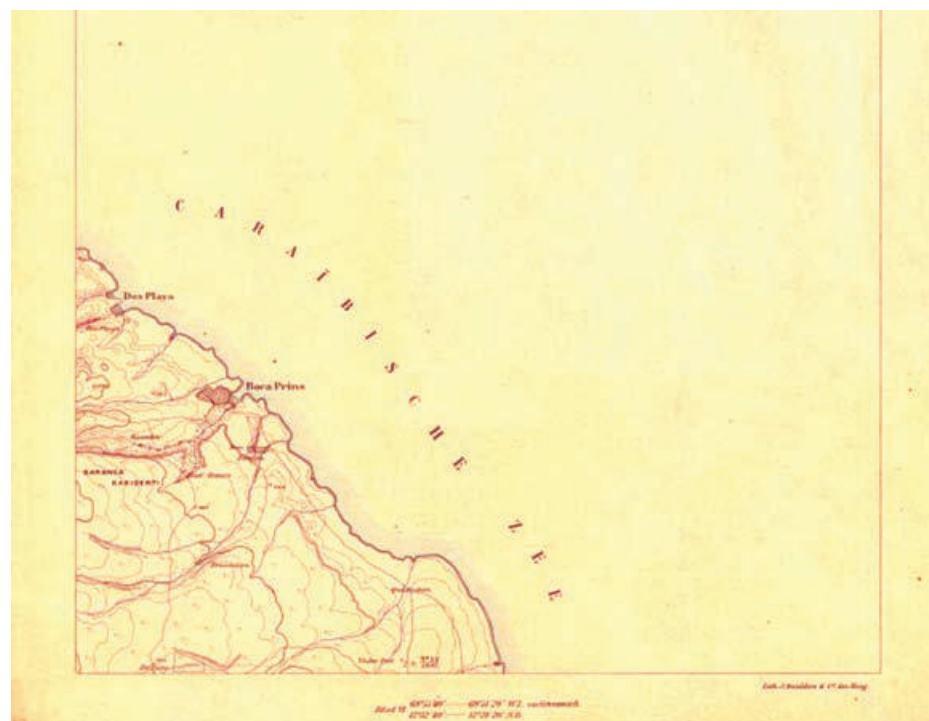
Arua, after decades as the leader of his tribe, spent his last days on the island. Having reached 80 years old, he called for his family on his death bed. In his hammock, he said: "My children, many years have passed, and I've asked my warrior to bring me back to the island so I can laid to rest. The God of living has given me the gift of life to see my son, grandchildren and great grandchildren. But now he is calling me home. Corobori, my torch is now passed to you. Guide our people, and be the leader you were always meant to become. If one day you leave my island, do not forget that it is also yours. This is my last wish: When I die, bury me in our maize plantation."

And so when the Cacique passed away, his wishes were granted and he was laid to rest in the area we now know as the Paradera Cemetery. Where he used to live, they built the Paradera Church.

And that is the tale of what inspired the Aruba name. In the generations that lived or travelled back and forth to the island, there were many familiar names*, like Guadiriki, a warrior who was there when the island got discovered and his son, whom he called Huliba; Corobori and his children, Corodori, Camacuri and Turibana, Masiduri; and Malmok, the 13-year-old boy who alerted the Cacique when the Caribes attacked.

Familiar names: all these names are familiar to Arubans, as these are the names of places and plants on the island. □

Source: Un storia di e Indjan Arua (A story of the Indian Arua) by Adolf (Dufi) Kock.



Meet an Aruban trailblazers: Padu Lampe



(Oranjestad)—This week we remember one of our most beloved Aruban giant, Juan Chabaya Lampe—better known as Padu Lampe or Padu del Caribe. As one of the most important and renowned artists in the Aruban cultural sphere, Padu's long career led him to be honored today as "the father of culture."

On April 26th, 1920, Juan Chabaya Lampe "Padu Lampe/Padu del Caribe" was born in Nassaustraat, Oranjestad. He grew up in a happy musical environment, and it is because of this that he developed a love for music. Starting from the age of 12, he was agile in the clarinet, mandolin and cuatro. Henry Lampe, his father, was also a well-known pianist and musician.

In a publication of the informative seminar, "Observer", from august 1st, 1962, Padu's many merits and friendly personality stood out. It was said that he was an excellent pianist with a personal style and full of surprises. Secondly, though the composer was not too familiar with music theory, he showed innovations in his compositions. Lastly, Padu was a promoter of Creole music around the world.

One of the most important moments in Aruban history, in which he was able to witness first-hand, was the first radio broadcast on the island on March 20th, 1954. Here, he was accompanied by Antillean guitarist Julian Coco and Hubert "Loi" Booi.

In the art world, Padu was also a known painter. During his youth,

he made several painting using his unique style. In 1939, he participated in an art exhibit in New York, where he won a bronze medal for his painting "Typical View of Aruba."

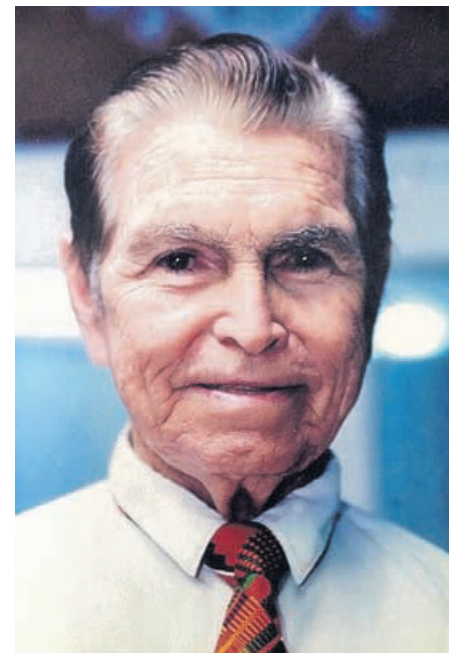
Padu remained a popular artist within the Dutch Antilles and the Caribbean as a pianist, singer, author and painter. Padu Lampe was a local artist who became renowned in Venezuela, Colombia, The U.S. and The Netherlands too. In the 1950s, he sold no less than 50 thousand copies of his long-playing albums (LPs).

Padu Lampe was a multifaceted artist, inspired by his interest in parapsychology and supernatural phenomenon. He wrote three books in Papiamentu on the subject in 1986, which was published by the Aruban National Printing Press with sponsorship provided by the Prince Bernhard Funds Netherlands Antilles.

Besides that, Padu passed his exam on "Society to Advanced Ethical Hypnosis" in 1964 in New Jersey. He received a certificate as a hypnotechnician, which gave him the authority to practice hypnosis in some states.

Over the course of his career, he received many accolades and awards in Aruba, Curacao, Venezuela and the Netherlands.

Padu del Caribe passed away on November 29th, 2019, at the age of 99 years old. Padu brought the Aruban culture around the world. His legacy will remain ingrained in



the Aruban cultural history, and he will be known forever as one of the most influential trailblazers of our community.

Padu will always be in Aruba's heart, because he had composed various special songs dedicated to the mothers of the island; his song "Sonrisa di un baby" ("A baby's Smile") has been written in three different languages. Padu also wrote our national anthem "Aruba Dushi Tera", along with Mr. Rufo Wever. This song was approved by the government of Aruba and was named the official anthem of the island in 1976.

Other songs that have been considered as being almost a second anthem for Arubans is the special composition he wrote for his wife Daisy Croes called "Abo so". Daisy later passed away in 1994. □

Birds of Aruba



ORANJESTAD — On May 11th, 2010, the Aruba Birdlife Conservation was founded with the aim of protecting the biodiversity in general and birds in and around Aruba in particular.

Among other things, the foundation will focus on increasing the survival chances of species of wild birds by promoting their preservation and conservation. The foundation publishes the most beautiful pictures of local birds on their social media that show us the beauty of Aruba's birds and nature in general. Aruba Today gives you a little peek with the following pictures and

descriptions from the foundations Facebook page.

The Great Egret

Serenity in Aruba's National Park, a Great Egret flying in peace. When it is peaceful and quite, beautiful things start happening in nature.

Canadian in the house

The breeding season is over and it's getting pretty cold in North America. Shore birds have



started moving southwards as early as July. This wetland beauty wants to keep its toes warm. Our Canadian friends know exactly where they can do so best. A Greater Yellowlegs rediscovering Aruba's Bubali Wetlands.

Cabochon

In its living form of so much more value than any gemstone. Aruba's smallest and most master of flight. A top pollinator. A hovering Blenchi inspecting the human who just entered his territory. English: Blue-tailed Emerald (male) Dutch: Blauwstaartsmaragdkolibrie (mannetje). Aruba's to enjoy. Aruba's to protect. □

Forgotten gems: Open air movie theaters

(Oranjestad)—During the span of over 100 years, Aruba only saw five open air movie theaters. Now practically obsolete on the island, these theaters were once frequently visited by locals and migrants in the 20th century.

The first open air theater was constructed in 1920 and was commissioned by Shon Eduard (Eddy) de Veer. This theater was located at the Hotel Colombia in Oranjestad, which is now where the Aruban census office is located. The theater was simple; it only consisted of a screen, and visitors had to bring their own chairs to enjoy the popular silent movies of the time.

American migrants who worked in the refinery and lived in the Lago Colony in Sero Colorado also had their piece of the pie with their Open air Theatre, which formed part of the Esso Club, also known as the Pan-Am Club. It was at this theater that "Talkies" were first streamed, mov-



ies with sound. This theater mostly streamed American blockbusters for the American expats, this way making sure that these migrant were not missing out on

entertainment from their home land.

In the 1950's and 60's, Savaneta saw their own open air theater, located in front

of the Marinier's Kazerne (Marine Barracks). This theater was mostly visited by the neighboring marines, who didn't have much entertainment other than

movies at that time.

The last and most recent open air theater was constructed in the form of a drive-in theater. A popular American concept, the Drive Inn located in Balashi was a hot spot for teenagers, who had the habit of cramming all their friends in one car to go see the movies. For this phenomenon there was a separate price that you had to pay called the "car crash".

This theater closed around 2012, but was re-opened during the pandemic in July 2020, where movies were streamed on a gigantic screen set up in front of stacked containers. However, this nostalgic form of entertainment did not last very long as it was closed again only a year or two later. Nowadays you can still see the stacked containers when you drive near the bridge in Balashi. □

Source: "De kolibrie op de rots en meer over de geschiedenis van Aruba" by Evert Bongers.

Aruba's Bocas: home to the rarest fossil reefs on the planet!

(Oranjestad)—If you've been to the northern coast of Aruba already, you've probably noticed how the ground differs entirely from the sandy beaches on the southern part of the island. These hard surfaces, with sharp bumps and holes are actually fossilized coral reefs, of which its growth and changes can be traced back to the last glacial period.

On May 30 2023, geoscientists, Dr. Patrick Boyden from the Marum research faculty at the University of Bremen, Prof. dr. Alessio Rovere from the Ca' Foscari University of Venice and Prof. dr. Gianfranco Scicchitano, from the University of Bari Aldo Moro, presented their research on these fossilized coral reefs at the University of Aruba. Their focus for their research included studying the health and formation patterns of these coral reefs, and to

investigate how these reefs have responded and can respond to fluctuating sea levels or extreme weather, like hurricanes and tsunamis.

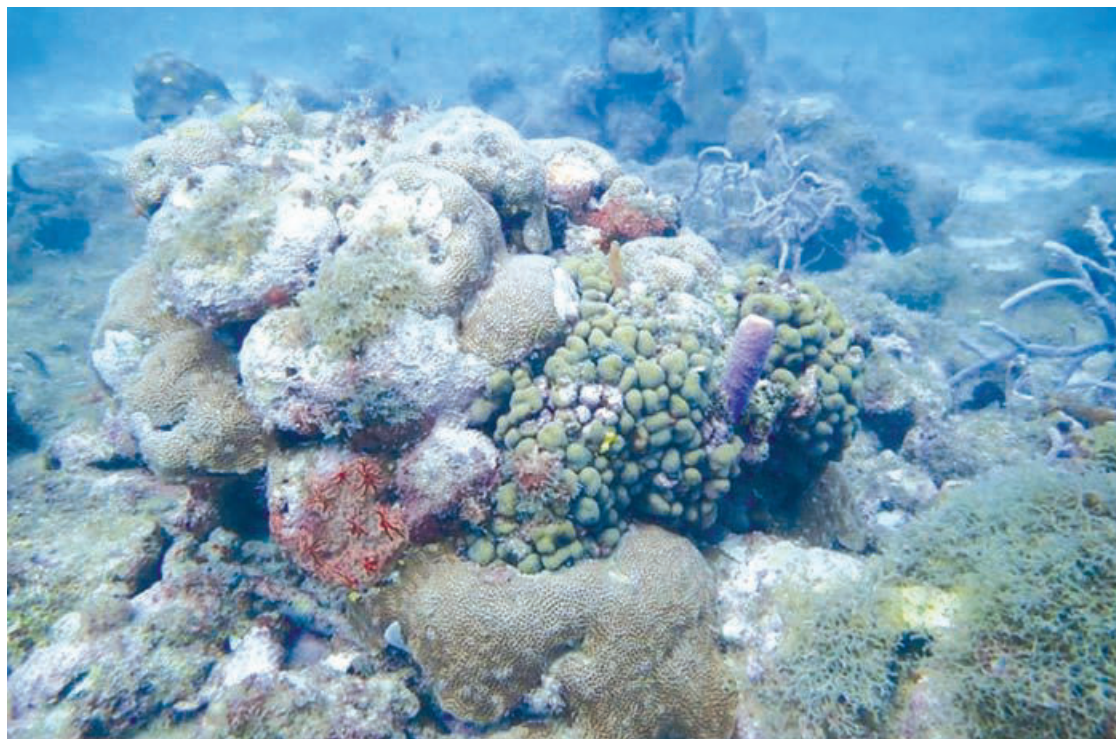
Through underwater and land surveillance, and 3D models of the reefs, they were able to narrow down when these formations started to take place. They were also able to track the fluctuation of sea levels during the past hundred or even thousands of years, and the effects that this fluctuation has had on the coral reefs of the windward side of Aruba.

These findings can certainly put things into perspective. The ground on which we have walked many times on the northern part of the island hold such rich history, history that dates back to a time that most of us cannot even imagine. As the scientists themselves have

pointed out, these fossilized reefs on the windward side are truly an incredible and rare remnant of geological history, as they provide a clear view of how these reefs have formed.

This research is also important for the future of coral reefs on the island. By studying rising sea levels and climate impact on these coral reefs, we are able to take concrete action in protecting and preserve our coral reefs. So, if

you are ever visiting one of the bocas or driving along the northern part of the island, please be conscious to help protect our natural historical remnant. Oh, and wear (coral-friendly) sunscreen! □



CROSSWORD

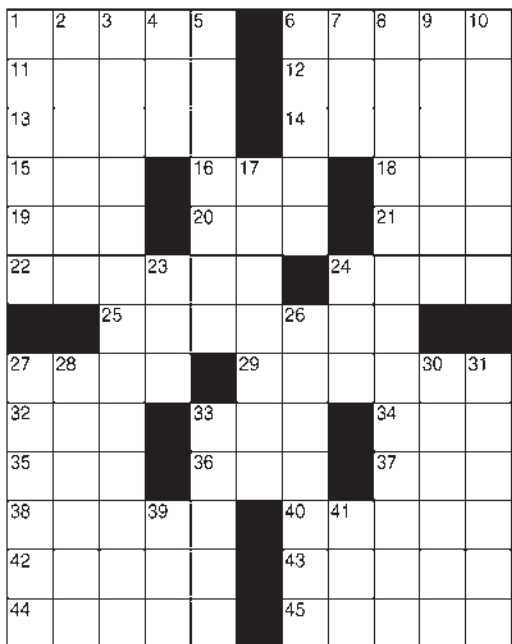
By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 38 Hold up
1 Blasting stuff
6 Studies intensely
11 Earthy color
12 Indian coin
13 Oscar winner
14 Ham it up
15 Cheese partner
16 Yacht spot
18 Paint buy
19 Before today
20 Scot's cap
21 PC key
22 Pi, phi, or psi
24 To boot
25 Try a plane
27 Gin flavoring
29 Cry of distress
32 Mythical piper
33 Singer Tormé
34 Boston team, familiarly
35 Curved path
36 Small worker
37 Pilot's guess: Abbr.

DOWN

- 1 Ordinary
2 Glacial period
3 Francis Ford Coppola film
4 Legal matter
5 Electra's brother
6 Coffee add-in
7 Toddy base
8 Francis Ford
9 Tin and titanium
10 Handled
17 Made of clay
23 Golf need
24 Completely
26 Was blue
27 Black suit
28 City on the Rio Grande
30 Newtonian concern
31 Forces, as payment
33 "Who Says" singer John
39 Tennis feat
41 One — kind



12-1

A XYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

12-1

CRYPTOQUOTE

S J V Q A Y J T V C Q Z T A Z T C V ;

J Q ' T Z X A R A H Y Z Q J C V .

— Z V Z B J I Z B J T W Y Z

Cryptoquote: WHEN PEOPLES CARE FOR YOU AND CRY FOR YOU, THEY CAN STRAIGHTEN OUT YOUR SOUL. — LANGSTON HUGHES



Cruise ship Schedule: Nov. 17 - 23 2025

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	CALLS
MON	17	CELEBRITY ASCENT	08.00	18.00	C	1
TUE	18	BRITANNIA	07.00	18.00	B	1
		SERENADE OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C	1
		OASIS OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	I	1
WED	19	CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE	08.00	23.00	B	1
		OCEANIA ALLURA	10.00	22.00	C	1
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
THU	20	AIDASOL	08.00	18.00	B	1
		CARIBBEAN PRINCESS	09.00	22.00	C	1
SAT	22	AIDAPERLA	09.00	22.00	C	1
		ROYAL CLIPPER	09.00	18.00	B	1
SUN	23	MSC DIVINA	08.00	18.00	C	1
		FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E	-

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 8 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.



Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.



Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku



Difficulty: ★★★★★

11/22

Answer to previous puzzle

4	7	9	5	3	2	1	8	6
6	8	1	9	7	4	3	2	5
3	5	2	1	8	6	4	9	7
7	9	6	8	5	3	2	1	4
5	2	8	4	6	1	7	3	9
1	3	4	7	2	9	5	6	8
9	1	5	3	4	8	6	7	2
8	6	7	2	1	5	9	4	3
2	4	3	6	9	7	8	5	1

Difficulty: ★★★★★

11/21

What to know about expanded work requirements about to kick in for SNAP

By **DAVID A. LIEB** and **GEOFF MULVIHILL**

Associated Press (AP)—After a disruptive U.S. government shutdown, federal SNAP food assistance is again flowing to low-income households. But in the months ahead, many participants will have to abide by new work requirements.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides monthly benefits averaging around \$190 per person to about 42 million people nationwide. During the first couple weeks of November, many of those recipients missed their regular allotments as President Donald Trump's administration battled in court over whether to tap into reserves to fund the program while the government was shut down.

Here's what to know about SNAP:

The benefits are available across the country after lapses

For the first part of the month, the situation was chaotic after the federal government said SNAP would not be funded because of the government shutdown.

Some states replenished the electronic benefit cards used in the program either fully or partially, using their own funds or federal dollars that were part of court orders. Others didn't. Most states boosted food charities, but lines were long and some shelves were empty.

As soon as the government reopened on Nov. 12, many states rushed to get out benefits.

By Tuesday, all states either had loaded full November benefits onto people's electronic spending cards or were working on it, according to an Associated Press review. Participants should receive December SNAP benefits according to their normal schedule.

More SNAP recipients will face work requirements. A massive tax and spending bill signed into law in July by Trump expanded



A sign is displayed for EBT for the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) at the Friend's Meat Market and Grocery, Friday, Nov. 14, 2025, in Miami.

requirements for many adult SNAP recipients to work, volunteer or participate in job training for at least 80 hours a month. Those who don't are limited to three months of benefits in a three-year period. The work requirements previously applied to adults ages 18 through 54 who are physically and mentally able and don't have dependents. The new law also applies those requirements to those ages 55 through 64 and to parents without children younger than 14. It repeals work exemptions for homeless individu-

als, veterans and young adults aging out of foster care. And it limits the ability of states to waive work requirements in areas lacking jobs. The Trump administration waived the work requirements in November, but the three-month clock on work-free SNAP benefits will be in full force for much of the country in December. Under a Nov. 1 court order, the count will not yet begin in places with existing waivers in place due to relatively high local unemployment rates. Those waivers extending past this month cover all or

parts of 10 states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands, and are set to expire between the end of 2025 and January 2027, depending on the place. □

The Associated Press.



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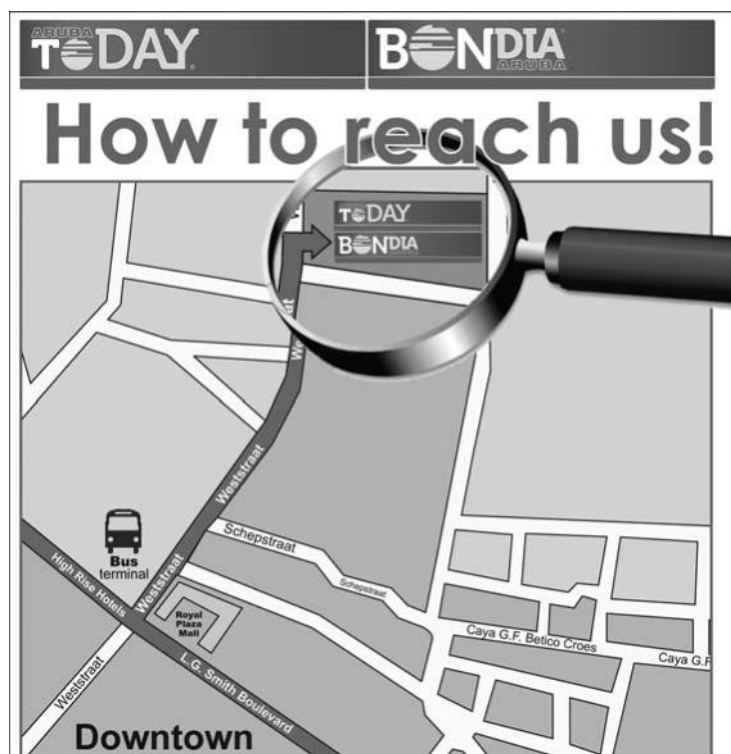
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Aloe: Tel. 584 4606

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850
Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic
+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

AID FOUNDATIONS

Aruba Food Bank
Tel. 588 0002
FAVI- Visually Impaired
Tel. 582 5051
Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952
Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989
Fundacion Contra Violencia
Relacional Tel. 583 5400
Centre for Diabetes
Tel. 524 8888
Child Abuse Prevention
Tel. 582 4433
Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

2026 World Cup: Coach Arnold feels Iraq's passion to pass final playoff test after 40-year wait

By **GRAHAM DUNBAR** AP Sports Writer

ZURICH (AP) — Iraq is one game away from soccer's 2026 World Cup in North America and its veteran coach senses a little pressure and a huge achievement ahead.

For Iraq fans, a 40-year wait through their nation's troubled modern history to return to the World Cup can end in the last of an epic 21-game qualifying campaign. That is more games than any other team played getting to the tournament in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Iraq just has to win an elimination playoff against Bolivia or Suriname scheduled in March. Bolivia and Suriname meet days earlier also in Monterrey or Guadalajara.

"If ever a country is desperate to qualify, this is it," Iraq coach Graham Arnold told The Associated Press in Zurich after FIFA made the playoff pairings draw Thursday.

"I've never seen anything like it the other night," he said, about Iraq scoring a penalty kick in the 17th minute of stoppage time to eliminate the United Arab Emirates in an Asian playoff.

There were 62,000 to see



Iraqi's Mohanad Ali, left, celebrates with teammates after scoring his side's first goal during the 2026 World Cup play off second leg match between Iraq and UAE, in Basra, Iraq, Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2025.

Iraq win 2-1, and 3-2 on aggregate score, inside the stadium in Basra a city often known for military conflict and turmoil since Iraq last played at the World Cup in 1986.

A video that circulated online showed Arnold behind the team dugout refusing to watch as Amir Al-Ammari prepared to score the decisive spot-kick.

Arnold's playoff pedigree Still, Arnold has seen it and done it before in World Cup qualification.

He guided his native Aus-

tralia through a win-or-go-home game against Peru in Doha to reach the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. His bold coaching helped Australia win the penalty shootout by sending on substitute goalkeeper Andrew Redmayne, who made the decisive save.

"The funny thing is, I didn't feel this much pressure," Arnold said of coaching Australia in that playoff, compared to the tension "that I felt the other night."

"Australia's my country, and I love Australia so

much, but I've been given a task that can change a country forever," he said. "And I'm really enjoying the task."

Iraq's soccer passion Arnold was appointed only in May, deep into a qualifying campaign that started in November 2023, for a job in a nation where soccer is the top sport.

"The people are beautiful people and they're very passionate about anything that they do," he said, describing the fans as "sensational."

"The whole thing of Iraq is a misperception. You know, they had to go through a war, they're still recovering from that war."

Baghdad was subjected to "shock and awe" bombing by the United States military in 2003 to begin toppling the regime of Saddam Hussein. For much of the past two decades, FIFA judged Iraq not safe enough to host games in international competitions like the World Cup.

"The roads are busy, everything's busy. But I've been there for five and a half months out of six, and I find it normal," said Arnold, adding he is unbothered by the heat and dust storms.

Social media ban Some in Arnold's squad play for clubs in Europe, including Al-Ammari in Poland, former Manchester United prospect Zidane Iqbal in the Netherlands and German-born Merchas Doski in the Czech Republic. Most are still in Iraq. "They have carried a lot of pressure and there's a lot of expectations," he acknowledged about the mental challenges.

"I've banned them from social media for the last two camps, from the day they got in, to the day we left. And we haven't lost a game." □

Kurashev scores only goal of shootout, Sharks beat the Kings 4-3

By **MICHAEL WAGAMAN** The Associated Press

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP) — Philipp Kurashev scored



Los Angeles Kings goaltender Anton Forsberg (31) watches the puck get past him for a goal by San Jose Sharks center Philipp Kurashev during the second period of an NHL hockey game, Thursday, Nov. 20, 2025, in San Jose, Calif.

The Associated Press.

in regulation and the only goal of a shootout, and the San Jose Sharks held on for a 4-3 win over the Los Angeles Kings on Thursday night.

San Jose's first player in the shootout, Kurashev skated toward his left then shifted direction toward the net before flipping the puck over the left shoulder of Kings goalie Anton Forsberg.

Kurashev also had a goal in the second period.

Ty Dellandrea had a goal and an assist for San Jose. Adam Gaudette scored a goal, while Collin Graf had two assists.

Yaroslav Askarov made 31 saves, two during the

shootout.

Joel Armia, Anze Kopitar and Adrian Kempe had goals for the Kings.

Gaudette got the Sharks going with a goal on San Jose's first shot of the game 2:33 into the first period. Gaudette raced in from the blue line and took a pass from Dellandrea then fired a wrist shot into the lower left corner of the net. After the Kings tied it on Armia's short-handed and unassisted goal late in the period, San Jose regained the lead when Collin Graf skated around behind the net then flipped to Dellandrea in front of the net for a 2-1 lead with 9.9 seconds remaining.

Los Angeles responded quickly with a tying goal less than two minutes into the second period when Kopitar slid the puck through the legs of Askarov. Trevor Moore and Cody Ceci had assists.

After the Kings had a goal nullified by an offside penalty midway through the second period, Kurashev's sixth goal of the season gave the Sharks a 3-2 lead. Kempe forced overtime with his seventh goal of the season with 59 seconds remaining in regulation.

Up next

Kings: Face the Bruins on Friday night.

Sharks: Play the Senators on Saturday night. □

Dominant defenses have carried some NFL teams this season

By **ROB MAADDI** AP Pro Football Writer

The Associated Press (AP)—

Dominant defenses still can carry teams in the NFL.

The Houston Texans proved it again Thursday night with another smothering performance against Josh Allen and the Buffalo Bills in a 23-19 victory.

Despite allowing the Bills to convert a fourth-and-27 on a perfectly executed hook-and-lateral play in the final minute, Houston's defense tightened up and held at their own 17.

The Texans (6-5) are back in the playoff picture with three straight wins behind backup quarterback Davis Mills, who has filled in for C.J. Stroud while he recovers from a concussion.

A stingy defense has helped Houston overcome an 0-3 start. The Texans entered Week 12 leading the NFL in scoring defense (16.3 points per game) and overall defense (258.1 yards). Special teams gave up a kickoff return touchdown so Houston's defense held the Bills to 13 points. Buffalo was averaging 29.2, tied for third-best in the NFL.

Allen was sacked a career-high eight times and never looked comfortable being chased by a fierce pass rush.

"Just the defense staying disciplined, keeping him contained in the pocket and we did a good job," said Danielle Hunter, who had two sacks.

Just four days after Allen



Buffalo Bills quarterback Josh Allen (17) slides to a stop under pressure from Houston Texans' Kamari Lassiter (4), Tim Settle Jr. (98) and others in the second half of an NFL football game Thursday, Nov. 20, 2025, in Houston.

had six touchdowns three passing and three rushing in a 44-32 win over Tampa Bay, the Texans frustrated the reigning NFL MVP throughout the game. He threw two interceptions and didn't have any TDs.

"Everybody hunted tonight," said Will Anderson Jr., who had 2 1/2 sacks and batted down a pass on third-and-1 from the 17 that would have gone for a first down and perhaps a score. "We were talking about being relentless, empty the tank. We got a long break. Everybody give it all you got."

Houston's performance was reminiscent of Philadelphia's dominant defense

sive effort against Patrick Mahomes and the Kansas City Chiefs in the Super Bowl nine months ago.

The Eagles have carried that defensive success over into this season. They just beat the Green Bay Packers and Detroit Lions in consecutive games while scoring just 26 points because the defense allowed one touchdown and three field goals.

The Texans have held nine opponents to 20 points or less this season.

"When you have a defense like that, you're in every game so you have to take advantage of your opportunities and play a clean game," Mills said.

Quarterbacks make the most money, wide receivers get much of the attention and offenses grab the headlines.

But defenses still win games. The top 16 teams in scoring defense each have a winning record. Eight of the top 10 teams in overall defense have a winning record.

The Denver Broncos are 9-2 despite an inconsistent offense because they have a ferocious defense that's third in yards (274.4) and scoring (17.5).

They just held Mahomes and the Chiefs to 311 yards in a 22-19 victory last week. "They just play hard and tough," Broncos QB Bo Nix said about his team's defense.

fense. "I think you can just take a few drives; they may give up an explosive, miss out on a tough penalty, but they bow up. If you're going to get in the red zone, we're going to keep you to a field goal. If you struggle, if we get you behind the sticks, you're going to have to punt. V.J. (defensive coordinator Vance Joseph), he does a great job with the scheme and then our guys play well in that scheme. They just play really hard and they're resilient. I think they're really confident and they know that they are good. They know that they can rely on the front and our guys just get after the quarterback, and it makes it tough on the opposing team."

The 1985 Chicago Bears and the 2000 Baltimore Ravens are top examples of teams that relied on defense to win Super Bowls. There's also the Pittsburgh Steelers and the "Steel Curtain" defenses in the 1970s that won four Super Bowls. The New England Patriots won three of their first six Super Bowl titles with Tom Brady on the strength of Bill Belichick's defense.

The 2013 Seattle Seahawks and the "Legion of Boom" defense held Denver's record-setting offense, led by Peyton Manning, to just eight points. The 2015 Broncos with Manning became champions thanks to their defense. The 1990 New York Giants are another example. □

The Associated Press.

Berrettini gives Italy the lead against Belgium in their Davis Cup semifinal

The Associated Press

BOLOGNA, Italy (AP) — Matteo Berrettini beat Raphael Collignon 6-3, 6-4 to give two-time defending champion Italy the lead against Belgium in their Davis Cup semifinal on Friday. The No. 56-ranked Berrettini, a 2021 Wimbledon runner-up with 10 singles titles on the tour, clinched the first set on serve against No. 86 Collignon. Collignon dropped his opening serve of the second set but he broke back for 2-2. Berrettini withstood aggressive shot-making to break for 4-3 and won on his first match point with a love hold.

Later Friday, No. 22 Flavio Cobolli faced No. 43 Zizou Bergs in the second singles in the Italian city of Bologna. Neither Belgian

has won a singles title on the men's tour. Italy or Belgium meets the winner of Saturday's semifinal between Germany and Spain.

No Sinner or Alcaraz

Italy was without No. 2-ranked Jannik Sinner. The four-time Grand Slam champion, who led Italy to the titles in 2023 and 2024, opted to sit out. He retained the ATP Finals title on Sunday, beating No. 1 Carlos Alcaraz in the final.

Six-time major winner Alcaraz sustained a right hamstring injury in that match and then pulled out of Davis Cup action.

The Davis Cup Final 8 is the sixth edition of the revamped event that has the champion decided at a neutral site. □



Italy's Matteo Berrettini celebrates after winning a Davis Cup semifinal singles tennis match between Italy and Belgium against Belgium's Raphael Collignon in Bologna, Italy, Friday, Nov. 21, 2025.

The Associated Press.

Yarde challenges Benavidez for light-heavy title in Riyadh and Norman Jr faces Haney

The Associated Press

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AP)

— London native Anthony Yarde gets a third shot at a light-heavyweight world title when he faces WBC champion David Benavidez on Saturday night in the Saudi Arabian capital. Yarde (27-3, 24 KOs) was stopped in the 11th round by WBO champion Sergey Kovalev in 2019 and couldn't get out of the eighth round against Artur Beterbiev in 2023 with the WBC, WBO and IBF titles on the line.

"I keep hearing this saying three times a charm or third-time lucky," the 34-year-old Yarde said. "I don't really believe in luck but I feel like I'm a better fighter now, a bit more experienced. This is my time, my moment."

The undefeated Benavidez (30-0, 24 KOs) said there's "a lot at stake" in the bout. "Anthony Yarde, he's trying to capture a world title. I'm trying to capture all the titles and unify all the titles



Boxers Anthony Yarde of Britain, right, punches Sergey Kovalev of Russia during their WBO light heavyweight title bout in Chelyabinsk, Russia, Saturday, Aug. 24, 2019.

The Associated Press.

in the light-heavyweight division," Benavidez said.

"I've never overlooked anybody, that's why I'm in the position where I'm at now," the Arizona native added. "I've given Anthony all the respect he deserves. I've

studied him for a long, long time. I'm extremely ready for whatever he brings to the table."

Brian Norman Jr. vs. Devin Haney WBO welterweight champion Brian Norman Jr. (28-0, 22 KOs) faces former

two-division world champion Devin Haney (32-0, 15 KOs) in the all-American co-main event.

"I truly feel like either you've got it or you don't," Norman said. "He's done wonderful things in his time pe-

riod. But it's time for another face to come up here and do his own thing. (Haney) is going to sleep."

Haney is still trying to move past his fight with Ryan Garcia in April 2024. Garcia dropped Haney three times but Garcia's victory was later declared a no-contest because he tested positive for performance-enhancing drugs.

Haney is a former light-weight (135 lbs) and super lightweight (140 lbs) world champion. He beat Jose Carlos Ramirez by unanimous decision in a 12-round welterweight (147 lbs) bout in Times Square in February. British fighter Conor Benn could be in line for Saturday's winner.

How to watch?

The event will be streamed on DAZN pay-per-view. The Norman-Haney ring walks are expected at 8 p.m. ET (0100 GMT Sunday), which is 4 a.m. local time in Riyadh. The Benavidez-Yarde ring walks will follow about one hour later. □

Milan Cortina Olympic mountains are wintry white after 1st big snowstorm of the season

By ANDREW DAMPF AP Sports Writer

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy (AP) — The mountains that will host the upcoming Milan Cortina Winter Olympics have been hit with their first significant snow-

storm of the season.

On the upper sections of the Olympia delle Tofane course in Cortina where women's Alpine skiing will be contested for the Feb. 6-22 Games, up to 20 centimeters (nearly eight inch-

es) of snow had fallen by Friday morning.

There was still some long grass popping out of the snow in places but the piste and surrounding areas are now wintry white.

"We have on top 20 centimeters of really fresh snow, light snow, and (at the finish) we have 15 (six inches)," said Matteo Gobbo, the local organizing committee's venue sport manager for women's skiing. "This should be a good base to improve the snow-making with the artificial snow."

"Our target is to have between 80 centimeters (more than 2 ½ feet) and one meter (three feet) of snow on the course," Gobbo added in an interview with The Associated Press in the Tofane's finish area. That's slightly more than the amount of snow that Gobbo and his team usu-

ally work with for the annual World Cup races in Cortina. But for the Olympics, more snow is required because there are more races, more competitors and generally a lot more people on the slope.

"And this consumes the snow and reduces the surface during the Olympics and then the Paralympics," Gobbo said.

The minimal snow cover required for World Cup races is 35 centimeters (slightly more than a foot).

"We want to have not an easy course, but a good course for everyone, because at the Olympics, we expect the top athletes but also all the other athletes that can (qualify)," Gobbo said. "We want to avoid to have injuries, crashes and so on. We want to just have a really, really good show."

Portable stands for specta-

tors still needed to be erected in the finish area, which is still halfway up the mountain.

The current plan is to have spectator capacity at 3,500 but Gobbo said organizers are considering adding another 1,000 people if they are able to erect a new, temporary gondola from the city center.

Construction for the new gondola to near the finish area has prompted environmental concerns after sink holes developed in the middle of recreational ski slopes.

"It's an issue," Gobbo said of how to get so many people up the mountain, with the main option a single, narrow, steep and windy road.

It also snowed in downtown Cortina and in Bormio, where men's Alpine skiing at the Olympics will be held. □



A view of the Olympia delle Tofane course where the women's Alpine skiing will be contested at the 2026 Milan Cortina Winter Olympics, in Cortina D'Ampezzo, Italy, Friday, Nov. 21, 2025.

The Associated Press.